

BURNHAM-ON-SEA
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Medical Officer's  
Annual Report**

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1947

**ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR YEAR 1947**

To the Chairman and Members of the Burnham-on-Sea Urban District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my fourth Annual Report and thirty third in the series of Medical Officers Reports of the Area.

The Report shows a satisfactory state of Public Health, but much still requires to be done.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
GEOFFREY B. EGERTON,
Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area = 2,246 acres.

Population :-

1931 Census	7,705
Registrar General's Estimate for 1947	8,751	

Rateable Value = £68,095

Sum represented by a penny rate = £254, 15s. 6d.

INDUSTRIES. The chief industries in the area are: Brick and Tile Yards, Timber Yards, Bacon Factory, Tray Factory, Perambulator Canopy Factory, Laundry, Creamery, and Services Returned Stores Depot.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY 1947.

		Male	Female	Total
Live Births				
Legitimate	...	87	78	165
Illegitimate	...	4	2	6
				<u>171</u>
Still Births		Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	1	2	3
Illegitimate	...	0	1	1
				<u>4</u>

Birth Rate: 19.5 per 1,000

		Male	Female	Total
Deaths	...	50	71	121

Death Rate: 13.8 per 1,000

Infantile Mortality. (Deaths of Infants under one year of age)

		Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	1	1	2
Illegitimate	...	2	0	2

VITAL STATISTICS.

REGISTERED BIRTHS. After allowing for inward and outward transfers, the Registrar General credited the Urban District with 171 Live Births for 1947:- 87 males and 78 females. Of these 6 were illegitimate (4 males and 2 females).

The registered number of Still Births was 4 (1 male and 3 females) of which number 1 female was illegitimate.

The Birth Rate for 1947 was 19.5 per 1,000 of the population, which is higher than that for the previous year (16.7), but below that of the country as a whole (20.5).

DEATHS. 121 were registered as having occurred in the Urban District during the year; of these 50 were males and 71 were females. The number of deaths in the four quarters of the year were, First Quarter 49, Second Quarter 32, Third Quarter 19, and Fourth Quarter 21.

There were 4 deaths of infants under one year of age, 3 males and 1 female, of which number 2 males were illegitimate.

The Death Rate for 1947 was 13.8 per 1,000 of the population, which is slightly higher than that for the previous year (13.2)

The following Table shows the causes of death:-

All causes	Male 50	Female 71
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	3	2
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
Cancer of Buccal Cavity, Aesophagus and and Uterus (F)	—	1
Cancer of Stomach and Intestines	—	5
Cancer of Breast	—	1
Cancer of all other sites	6	8
Diabetes	—	—
Inter-Cranial Vascular Lesions	6	13
Heart Disease	19	21
Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	—	3
Ulcer of the Stomach or Duodenum	2	—
Appendicitis	—	—
Other Diseases of the Digestive System	—	—
Bronchitis	1	2
Pneumonia	—	1
Other Diseases of the Respiratory System	2	1
Nephritis	4	2
Premature Birth	1	—
Influenza	—	1
Congenital Malformation, birth injuries, infantile diseases	1	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	—
Road Traffic Accidents	1	—
Suicide	1	1
Other violent causes	1	5
All other causes	1	3

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following Table sets out particulars of Infectious Disease occurring in the area during the year.

Disease	Total cases notified	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths
Tuberculosis — Respiratory	14	—	5
Non-Respiratory	2	—	—
Dysentery	2	—	—
Scarlet Fever	4	2	—
Measles	191	1	—
Whooping Cough	17	2	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	3	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	1	—	—
Malaria (contractured abroad)	1	—	—
Acute Primary Pneumonia	3	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1	—
Erysipelas	2	—	—

Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis) was epidemic throughout the country during the latter half of 1947; one case was notified in one area, but was not confirmed, we, therefore, escaped this dreaded disease, in spite of the fact that cases occurred just beyond our boundaries on all sides.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The number of children immunised in the Area of this Authority was:- School children 37, Pre-school children 83, making a total of 120; while 380 children were given a secondary or reinforcing injection. It is to be noted that no case of Diphtheria was notified in this district during the year.

The Campaign against Diphtheria was begun by the Ministry of Health in 1940, when there were 46,281 cases with 2,480 deaths; in the year under review - 1947 - there were only 10,469 cases with 245 deaths—the lowest ever recorded.

I wish to ask here that free publicity be given to the fact that Free Immunisation in this area is available through the Family Doctor as well as through the Infant Welfare Centres.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

I. Public Health Officers of the Authority.

Medical Officer of Health—Dr. G. B. Egerton, M.C., M.B., B.S.

Surveyor—E. Dixon Grubb, A.M.I.C.E.

Sanitary Inspector—W. B. Graham, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

II. (a) Laboratory facilities—The Public Health Laboratory Service, Taunton.

(b) Ambulance facilities—The St John Ambulance, staffed by voluntary workers of the St. John Ambulance Brigade at Highbridge. For cases of Infectious Disease—The Axbridge Isolation Hospital Ambulance.

A Hospital Car Service is available for sitting cases, with headquarters at Weston-super-Mare and Bridgwater.

(c) Nursing—Two District Nurses in both Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge carry on with their good work.

(d) Clinics—The Infant and Child Welfare Centres in both Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge are going strong and are becoming increasingly popular. In Burnham, these clinics are held in the Church Hall on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in every month. In Highbridge, at the Adult School, Church St., on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in every month.

HOUSING.

There were 258 applicants for Council Houses at the end of 1947. Ninety permanent houses were erected during the year by the Council and Thirty-two by Private Enterprise, this includes one war-destroyed house rebuilt. Nine houses were in course of erection and twenty-four houses were converted into Flats and Dwellings by Private Enterprise.

HOUSES REQUIRED.

The Council is now looking for suitable sites for a further 100—160 houses.

This was a great achievement, and one that I do not think, can be beaten by any other comparable authority in the country.

SANITARY WORK.

Here I wish to acknowledge the help I have received throughout the year from Mr. W. B. Graham, the Sanitary Inspector.

1. WATER SUPPLY. The water supply from Winscombe is consistently reported as excellent. Samples of the raw water are submitted quarterly and have been classified as "Good" and "Excellent" by The Public Health Laboratory Service.

Improvements have been carried out with regard to metering and in the waste water detection organisation.

All houses within the Urban District boundaries have a main piped water supply.

2. MILK SUPPLY.

(a)	Total Number of registered Dairy Farms	21
(b)	Number of Retailers	17
(c)	Number of Producer Retailers included in (b)	7
(d)	Number of Licensed Pasteurising Plants	—
(e)	Number of Heat Treated Plants not included in (d)	1

3. ICE CREAM. The number of premises registered for

(a)	Manufacture	4
(b)	Sale	16

Improvements are being carried out by manufacturers as the necessary plant becomes available.

4. SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

(a)	Number for which licenses were issued in January 1940 under Food and Drugs Act, 1938, section 57	6
(b)	Slaughterhouses other than (a)	1

Note—None are in use under the Ministry of Food, all rationed meat being dealt with at Weston-super-Mare Abattoir.

5. KNACKERS YARD. One is licensed under Food and Drugs Act 1938 Section 57, and is still in use.

6. RIVER POLLUTION. No cases of River Pollution were dealt with during the year.

7. SEWAGE DISPOSAL. There were no extensions of Sewers, new works, or improvements during the year.

